

IN THE CLAIMS

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23. (New) A portable device, comprising:
a housing;
a bar code reader; and
a thumb wheel adapted to facilitate user interaction with the portable device, the thumb wheel
being rotatable about an axis, and at least a portion of the thumb wheel extending from the housing.
24. (New) The device of claim 23, the thumb wheel being transaxially moveable.
25. (New) The device of claim 24, the thumb wheel being transaxially moved to effect selection
of a function performable by the device.
26. (New) The device of claim 24, the housing being adapted to be held by one hand and the
thumb wheel being transaxially moved to effect selection of a function using the one hand.
27. (New) The device of claim 23, further comprising a processor and a card slot adapted to
receive a memory card storing executable programs that are executable by the processor.
28. (New) The device of claim 23, further comprising a display for displaying information
scanned by the bar code reader, and the thumb wheel being employable to facilitate a user to scroll
through the displayed information.
29. (New) The device of claim 28, the thumb wheel being employed to select a subset of the
displayed information.

30. (New) The device of claim 23, adapted to be held by a single hand of a user and providing for the user to employ the same hand to scroll through and select a function among a plurality of functions via the thumb wheel.
31. (New) The device of claim 23, being user programmable so as to tailor the device to be able to execute desired functions, the thumb wheel being employable to scroll through the desired functions via rotation of the thumbwheel.
32. (New) The device of claim 31, the thumb wheel providing for selection of at least one of the functions via depressing the thumb wheel in a transaxial direction.
33. (New) The device of claim 32, further including a processor coupled to the thumbwheel, the processor adapted to execute functions selected via depressing the thumb wheel in a transaxial direction.
34. (New) The device of claim 23, further including a control circuit operatively coupled to the thumb wheel and a processor, the control circuit adapted to provide at least one signal to the processor in response to movement of the thumb/wheel.
35. (New) The device of claim 23, the thumb wheel being employable to activate the bar code scanner.
36. (New) The device of claim 23, further including a display for displaying a plurality of menus, the menus presenting a plurality of functions or sub-functions, and the thumb wheel being employable to navigate through the respective menus.
37. (New) The device of claim 23, further including a transceiver to communicate to a remote computer a subset of collected data selected via a thumbwheel.

38. (New) A data collection device comprising:
a bar code scanner for collecting information; and
a thumb wheel that is rotatable about an axis and is transaxially moveable, the thumb wheel
providing for at least one of: scrolling through the collected information, selecting a subset of the
collected information, scrolling through a plurality of executable functions, and selecting a subset of
the executable functions.
39. (New) The device of claim 38, the plurality of executable functions comprising one or more
of: an inventory function, a production lot size function, a reorder level function, a safety stock
function, a total relevant history cost function, an ordering cost function, and a marginal cost function.
40. (New) The device of claim 38, the bar code reader being employable in scanning a patient's
ID tag, and the thumb wheel being employable to scroll through a plurality of screens relating to
patient information, the screens being displayed by a display that is part of the device.
41. (New) A portable inventory control device, comprising:
means for scanning bar code information; and
means for facilitating user interfacing with the device with a same user hand that is employed
to concurrently hold the device, the user interfacing comprising one or more of: scrolling through
functions, scrolling through scanned items, selecting a subset of the functions, and selecting a subset
of the scanned items.
42. (New) A method of using a portable inventory control device comprising:
collecting information via a bar code reader;
displaying the information via a display of the device; and
selecting a displayed function and/or item via a thumb wheel that is rotatable about an axis.
43. (New) The method of claim 42, further comprising using the thumb wheel to activate the bar
code reader.

44. (New) The method of claim 42, further comprising selecting the displayed function and/or item by transaxially moving the thumb wheel.

45. (New) The method of claim 42, further comprising using a memory card to add functionality to the device.

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46. (New) An inventory control system, comprising:
a network backbone;
a computer operatively coupled to the network backbone; and
a portable data collection device operatively coupled to the computer via the network backbone, the device comprising:
a bar code reader adapted to facilitate collecting information;
a thumb wheel that is rotatable about an axis, the thumb wheel facilitating user interaction with the device; and
a transceiver adapted to communicate to the computer a subset of the collected information that a user selected via the thumb wheel.